

**HADASSAH SAYS IT WON'T TAKE PART
IN FUTURE WORLD ZIONIST ELECTIONS**

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- In a surprise move, the largest Zionist organization in America, Hadassah, has decided not to participate in future elections for the World Zionist Congress.

In a statement announcing its decision, the group's national board said, "The human and financial resources expended on these costly and politically divisive elections are better invested in the concrete tasks which are the hallmark of Hadassah's practical Zionism."

The World Zionist Congress convenes approximately every five years and determines the direction of the World Zionist Organization. American delegates are elected through a complicated system that is based largely on membership in Zionist organizations.

The WZO is responsible for the promotion of aliyah and Zionist education worldwide. Its leaders also act in partnership with leaders of Diaspora fund-raising organizations in the governance of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Hadassah President Carmela Kalmanson described her organization's move as "serving notice" to the WZO that it is time for radical reform in its structure and constitution.

Most forcefully, it is calling for change in the system by which delegates to the World Zionist Congress are chosen. Such reform has been promised for years, but has not yet materialized, Kalmanson said.

She explained that ideas discussed in the past include an electoral college system or one in which elections would be scrapped altogether and organizations would be represented at the congress according to their membership rolls.

Other Zionist Groups Shocked

Hadassah's fellow Zionist organizations reacted with shock and dismay to the news of the decision not to participate in future elections.

"It's a very serious blow to the future of the Zionist movement," said Rabbi Eric Yoffie, executive director of the Association of Reform Zionists of America.

He said that if the democratic process of choosing delegates is abandoned, "it will mean the death" of the WZO, which will "cease to exist as anything other than a shell."

He said the legitimacy of the WZO "lies in its ability to reach the masses through the democratic process." He pointed out that a quarter of a million American Jews participated in the last elections.

But Kalmanson maintains that past elections for American representatives to the congress have been "neither democratic nor fair."

Indeed, the voting for the 1987 congress was marked by controversy. Penalties were handed out to numerous organizations for infractions such as padding membership lists, multiple ballots cast by the same person and other irregularities.

Observers point out that Hadassah's showing in the elections has been declining.

In the 1987 balloting, the organization lost 21 seats from the previous election. This was in no small part due to the decision of the Reform

and Conservative movements to enter the Zionist arena.

In the 1987 vote, Mercaz, the Conservative Zionist movement, which was running for the first time, picked up 20 seats, while ARZA gained 19 seats over the last time it ran.

"One can't help but take note of the fact that Hadassah has renounced democracy at the moment in history when it is beginning to lose its electoral dominance," Yoffie said.

Acrimonious Debates Cited

Kalmanson dismissed this suggestion, saying that "whether we have one vote more or one vote less is not the issue."

She said that not only were the elections cumbersome and expensive, costing the WZO an estimated \$1.5 million, but the debate the elections engendered was acrimonious and "painful."

Though Hadassah officially endorses religious pluralism, Kalmanson said many in her organization are unhappy that the Reform and Conservative movements have chosen the World Zionist Congress and the delegate elections as a major arena for the battle over "who is a Jew."

She said that controversy, which involves whether Israel should recognize non-Orthodox converts as Jews, remains a "side issue" to the overall Zionist enterprise.

Zelig Chinitz, executive director of the WZO-American Section, would not comment on the ramifications of Hadassah's decision.

But Simon Schwartz, president of the American Zionist Federation, said that there is a "possibility" that Hadassah's move will trigger a change in the WZO election bylaws and constitution.

As it stands now, he said, "the constitution and bylaws require the holding of elections unless there is 100 percent agreement" on the part of American Zionist organizations to waive them.

**BONN AMBIVALENT ABOUT TALKS
BETWEEN ISRAEL, EAST GERMANY**

By David Kantor

BONN, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- West Germany is closely following East German efforts to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

The government here would be most unhappy if Israel "rushed" to accept the East German initiative, according to diplomats who discussed the matter with reporters here, on condition of anonymity.

The commentary on East German relations with Israel coincides with a meeting between Israeli and East German representatives, which began in Copenhagen under a veil of secrecy Monday.

At the end of the first day, the Germans said the talks might lead to diplomatic relations.

The two sides are believed to be discussing that subject, along with war reparations and various areas of mutual cooperation.

But observers here and Israeli officials in Jerusalem consider it unlikely that relations will be established before a new East German government is sworn in.

The nation's first democratic elections, originally set for May 6, are now scheduled March 18,

Israeli correspondents in Copenhagen reported that the East Germans expressed a desire to open a new chapter in relations with Israel.

The talks reportedly included a lengthy discussion of the Holocaust and East Germany's hostile attitude toward Israel since it was established, the Israeli journalists said.

Hopes To Upgrade World Standing

The Israeli delegation is headed by Michael Shilo, an adviser to Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, and includes Shmuel Meiron, deputy director of the ministry's Eastern Europe department, and Michael Arbel, of the Israeli Embassy in Copenhagen.

The East German delegation is headed by Reiner Neumann, chief of the Middle East department at the Foreign Ministry in East Berlin.

Feelings in West Germany, meanwhile, may stem from rising sentiment in favor of German reunification.

According to the diplomats, East Germany is interested in forging ties with Israel in order to upgrade its international standing as a separate state and broaden the base of its legitimacy.

This is happening at a time when the very existence of East Germany is being called into question by its own population, which desires unification with the West, the diplomats explained.

Bonn's view was reflected in newspaper commentary Tuesday. The conservative daily Die Welt chided certain Jewish leaders and activists who negotiated two years ago with the since-deposed East German leader, Erich Honecker, on the subject of restitution for Nazi persecutees.

Those people, at best, displayed naivete when they gave the impression the issue would be settled soon, Die Welt said.

It noted that Bonn, on the other hand, established diplomatic ties with Jerusalem 25 years ago and has proven in many ways its sincere desire to make amends for the crimes the Nazis committed against the Jewish people.

West Germany, therefore, has won the right to be heard when East Germany and Israel negotiate the establishment of diplomatic relations, Die Welt said.

Israeli officials believe, nevertheless, that East Germany will meet demands by Israel that it recognize its share of responsibility for the Holocaust and offer reparations to surviving victims, as West Germany has done.

(JTA correspondent Gil Sedan in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)

PRAGUE TO RESTORE TIES NEXT WEEK

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- Czechoslovakia will resume diplomatic relations with Israel next week, it was learned here Tuesday.

Foreign Minister Moshe Arens will go to Prague to sign the pertinent documents.

Czechoslovakia severed diplomatic ties with Israel in 1967, following the Six-Day War. So did the Soviet Union and all Eastern bloc countries except Romania.

Restoration of those ties was one of the first commitments made by the new Czech president, Vaclav Havel, after his election last month.

Czechoslovakia will be the second Eastern European country to resume full relations with Israel. Hungary did so in September. Poland maintains an interests section in Tel Aviv, the lowest level of diplomatic representation.

ISRAEL TRYING TO CALM ALARM OVER ALIYAH TO THE TERRITORIES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- Israel has launched an information campaign aimed at calming growing international concern over the possibility that thousands of Soviet immigrants may be settled in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The initiative was launched after Israel received strongly worded warnings Monday from both Washington and Moscow about settling the Soviet newcomers in the administered territories.

They were reacting, in part, to recent remarks by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, which were widely perceived in the Arab world as an attempt to use increased emigration from the Soviet Union to justify dispossessing Palestinians in the territories.

In Washington, the State Department warned that "putting even more settlers in the territories is an obstacle to the cause of peace."

In Moscow, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Yuli Vorontsov warned that Israel's settlement policy could jeopardize the flow of immigrants from the Soviet Union.

And on Tuesday, Grigory Olhovich, head of a Soviet economic delegation currently visiting Israel, said that Moscow would appreciate assurances that the Soviet immigrants would not be settled in the territories.

The Foreign Ministry here issued a statement Tuesday expressing regret over "the style and content" of Vorontsov's statement. It also pointed out that less than 1 percent of the 29,000 olim who arrived last year settled in the territories.

Shamir Dismisses 'Artificial Storm'

Shamir, meanwhile, dismissed the furor over the issue as an "artificial storm" that would quickly pass.

At a meeting Tuesday with Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency Executives, the prime minister said he stood by his words that "a large, strong state" is needed to absorb massive aliyah.

But he said he does not mean that immigrants should be channeled to the administered territories. Immigrants will be free to settle wherever they want, he said.

Dinitz told Israel Radio later that everything must be done to "diminish the tension."

He stressed that the Jewish Agency does not forward funds raised by world Jewry for immigrant absorption beyond the Green Line, the boundary separating Israel from the territories.

Dinitz declined to discuss his differences with the prime minister. But the Knesset was deluged with no-confidence motions Tuesday from all parts of the political spectrum.

The left accused Shamir of jeopardizing aliyah. The right wing charged he is not absorbing the immigrants vigorously enough. Debate on the matter has been set for Feb. 12.

The American and Soviet reactions to Shamir's remarks followed weeks of lobbying by the Arab states. And more pressure can be expected.

The Palestine Liberation Organization's executive committee was discussing the situation during a special session in Tunis on Tuesday.

PLO leader Yasir Arafat told the Saudi newspaper Al-Yawm that he had asked "Arab elements" to apply pressure in Europe and at the United Nations to curb the exodus of Jews from the Soviet Union and the rest of Eastern Europe.

U.S. URGES ISRAEL TO BE SENSITIVE ABOUT DEPORTING PALESTINIAN ALIENS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- The State Department urged Israel on Tuesday to exercise "sensitivity and flexibility" in expelling Palestinians considered illegal residents of the West Bank.

"As we currently understand their policy, the Israelis impose difficult tests of residence," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

She said the United States has discussed with Israel its policy of deporting to Jordan Palestinians who are considered illegal aliens.

"They are well aware of our concern, particularly with regard to divided families," she said.

Tutwiler may have been reacting to a story Monday in *The Washington Post* that reported some 200 persons had been expelled during the last six months of 1989.

Most of them were women who had returned from abroad to their ancestral homes in the West Bank, in order to get married.

Their husbands remained in the West Bank. In some cases, children were expelled with their mothers; in other cases, they were allowed to stay with their fathers.

Israel also has expelled Palestinians who have traveled or worked abroad for more than three years, maintaining that they have forfeited their residency rights by staying away for this period.

SYRIAN WHO DEJECTED TO ISRAEL TEACHES ISRAELIS TO FLY MiG JET

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- A Syrian air force officer who defected to Israel in October has been teaching Israel air force pilots how to fly the Soviet-built MiG-23 jet he arrived in.

Maj. Mohammed Bassem Adel streaked into Israel airspace undetected on Oct. 11 and landed at a small airfield in the North used by crop-duster planes.

His MiG was the first advanced Soviet combat plane of its type to land intact outside the Soviet bloc or one of its client states.

On Monday, it was flown for the first time with an Israeli pilot at the controls. The pilot, identified only as a lieutenant colonel who heads the air force's flight testing unit, circled central Israel for about 50 minutes, flew over Jerusalem and landed without problems.

The MiG was accompanied by Israel air force F-15 and F-16 fighter-bombers, which made a photographic record of the test flight.

A senior air force officer told reporters that three month's preparation was needed for the flight. He credited Maj. Adel, who has asked for political asylum, with cooperating fully.

"He gave us all the information we needed, and more," the Israeli officer said. He said the intelligence would be shared with friendly foreign states, apparently meaning the United States.

Further extensive tests are planned to familiarize the Israeli air force with the most advanced aircraft deployed by Syria. Israeli strategists regard Syria as Israel's No. 1 enemy at this time.

Until now, the Israelis have had only a "general knowledge" of the MiG-23's avionics and electronics. After studying the aircraft, they expressed surprise at its level of sophistication,

especially the early warning and counter-measure systems.

The Israeli test pilot said he was impressed by the MiG's rate of climb. He said that after taking off with the American-made F-15 and F-16, the MiG shot upward in a stiff climb "and left them standing."

U.S. ANNOUNCES PLANS TO SELL WEAPONS TO ISRAEL AND EGYPT

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- The Bush administration announced Monday that it intends to sell \$773 million in Apache attack helicopters and Hellfire air-to-ground missiles to Egypt and Israel.

The sale is expected to become official in the first week of March, when the 30-day period expires for Congress to veto the request, since no opposition is expected.

Under the proposal, Egypt would buy \$488 million worth of weaponry, consisting of 24 Apaches, 492 Hellfires, as well as launchers, spare engines and other equipment.

Israel would buy 19 Apaches and 539 Hellfires, as well as the same support equipment as Egypt, worth \$285 million.

A pro-Israel source said the helicopters are much more important to Israel than the missiles. Another such source explained the helicopters meet a "serious operational requirement" for Israel.

The sources said the timing of the helicopter sale is important, because the administration has announced that it will be shutting down the production line on its Apache helicopters by Sept. 30, 1991.

The missiles do not upset the balance of power between Israel and its Arab neighbors, said one source.

SPAT BETWEEN LIKUD CAMPS CONTINUES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir met Tuesday with his arch rival and critic Ariel Sharon, to try to inject an element of decorum in the way Likud conducts its internal disputes.

But the two failed to agree even on an agenda for the party's Feb. 7 Central Committee meeting.

Sharon is making the rounds of Central Committee members, trying to score against Shamir by attacking the premier's closest ally in the party, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens.

Sharon, who is minister of industry and trade, hopes the Likud rank and file will reject Shamir's peace initiative. He wants the Central Committee's more than 2,000 members to vote on each issue, including Shamir's plan for Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and his conduct of diplomacy with the United States and Egypt.

Shamir demands that the Central Committee listen to his policy speech and vote to endorse it. Failing that, he says he will resign.

Sharon's latest accusation is that Arens, a former defense minister, dodged military service in 1948 and 1951.

Arens responded that Sharon must be ignorant of his record because he is a latecomer to Likud. The outspoken general did not enter politics until after the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

ONTARIO MAN IS THIRD CANADIAN TO BE INDICTED FOR WAR CRIMES

By Avi Jacob Hyman

TORONTO, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- A retired Ontario autoworker has become the third Canadian indicted for war crimes under a 1987 law here.

Stephen Reistetter, 75, an alleged former official of the fascist Hlinka Guard in Slovakia, is accused, among other things, of supervising the loading of 3,000 Jews into boxcars bound for Nazi death camps.

The allegations against him surfaced four years ago on the "Fifth Estate" program of the Canadian Broadcasting Corp.

Reistetter, a resident of St. Catharines, in the Ontario wine district, was arrested Jan. 18 and released on \$100,000 bail. He is scheduled to appear in court again on Feb. 15.

His attorney, John Stephens, has raised eyebrows here by implying that his arrest was tied to "pressure from Jewish groups" in Canada.

B'nai Brith Canada called that suggestion "offensive," saying that "neither we, nor any other organization, direct the Justice Department, which bases its activities on stringent legal standards."

Reistetter was arrested less than a month after war crimes charges were brought against 72-year-old Michael Pawlowski of Renfrew, Ontario.

Pawlowski was accused on four counts of war crimes and four counts of crimes against humanity. He is alleged to have murdered 410 Jews and 80 non-Jewish Poles in the Byelorussian town of Snov, in 1942. His case will resume on March 23.

Meanwhile, the trial of Imre Finta continued in Toronto this week.

The Hungarian-born former restaurateur from Hamilton, Ontario, was the first Canadian brought to trial under a 1987 amendment to the criminal code. The amendment allows Canadian courts to try alleged war criminals living in Canada for offenses committed on foreign soil.

Finta, a member of the pro-Nazi Hungarian gendarmerie during World War II, is accused of deporting and murdering Jews.

All three war-crimes trials are proceeding by preferred indictment. It is a legal tactic whereby the prosecution may speed up the process by eliminating a preliminary hearing.

KGB CHIEF WARNS AGAINST POGROMS

NEW YORK, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- The chief of the KGB in the Leningrad region says he knows who the anti-Semites are and has warned them that "drastic measures" would be taken for any anti-Semitic activity, the World Jewish Congress reported here.

The WJC quoted a report by Tass, the Soviet news agency, describing a live television broadcast in Leningrad, during which Lt. Gen. Anatoly Kurkov, regional head of the KGB, answered viewers' questions.

Discussing ethnic strife, the general noted that rumors were rife in Leningrad that pogroms against Jews could be expected.

"I can state quite responsibly that there are absolutely no realistic grounds for pogroms or any kind of outrages," Kurkov said.

"Moreover, the KGB Leningrad department knows people who preach anti-Semitic views. In case of any moves on their part, we shall take the most drastic measures," he said.

ADL SAYS U.S. ARMY WAS NOT WRONG IN REJECTING VETERAN'S MEDAL CLAIM

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has withdrawn its support for a Jewish World War II veteran who last month was refused a Congressional Medal of Honor by the Army.

The ADL had worked on behalf of David Rubitsky, 72, for two years. In December, the Army said there was "incontestable evidence" that Rubitsky did not, as he claimed, kill 500 Japanese in the 1942 battle for New Guinea.

In a letter last week to Lt. Col. Terrence Adkins, chief of the Army's Military Awards Branch, Abraham Foxman, national director of the ADL, rejected Rubitsky's claim that a senior officer refused to write a recommendation because of anti-Semitism.

"The thoroughness with which you conducted your investigation into Mr. Rubitsky's allegations is an admirable and welcome demonstration of a similar commitment by the Army," said Foxman.

Foxman called Rubitsky's anti-Semitism charge "unfounded," adding, "We concur with the Army Award Branch's dismissal of his claims."

Foxman said the ADL was involved in Rubitsky's case because it "treats any allegation of anti-Semitism as a serious matter necessitating a careful investigation."

"It is only when we are fully satisfied that such charges have been closely examined" and "convinced beyond any reasonable doubt that the charges are unfounded that our files are closed," Foxman wrote.

B'nai B'rith International had joined the ADL in December in criticizing the Army's decision. But Buzzy Gordon, spokesman for B'nai B'rith International, said his group's position on the case had been primarily based on ADL findings.

The Jewish War Veterans of America was the one Jewish group that initially backed the Army's decision.

STONE ANCHORS FOUND NEAR DEAD SEA BELIEVED TO BE OVER 2,000 YEARS OLD

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 30 (JTA) -- Three massive stone anchors recently found near Ein Gedi, on the shores of the Dead Sea, are well over 2,000 years old, according to scientists at the carbon-dating laboratory of the Weizmann Institute of Science.

They are the first datable evidence of ancient maritime traffic on the desolate lake, which lies at the lowest point below sea level on the Earth's surface.

The anchors were found with their mooring ropes intact. That provided organic material for the carbon testing.

The ropes were preserved by the high saline content of the Dead Sea waters, according to Dr. Aric Nissenbaum of the Weizmann Institute.

The anchors weigh between 240 and 300 pounds. They are believed to have sunk to the sea bottom between the years 460 and 260 BCE.

They could be relics of a naval battle in 312 BCE that resulted in the defeat of the Syrian king, Antigonos, who wanted to wrest the monopoly of Dead Sea asphalt from the local inhabitants.

It was probably the world's first oil war, Nissenbaum remarked.